



Idaho Division of  
Vocational Rehabilitation

2017 - 2021

## Content and Format

The Plan is divided into four sections. The first three sections describe the programs administered under the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR). Each of the programs described, Vocational Rehabilitation, Extended Employment Services, and the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, outline specific goals, objectives, performance measures and benchmarks for achieving their stated goals. The final section addresses external factors impacting IDVR.

Since Federal and Idaho State governments operate according to different fiscal years, and since IDVR is accountable to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on a federal year basis (October 1 – September 30), the agency will use federal year statistics for reporting the Vocational Rehabilitation program portion of IDVR. Any comparisons noted in benchmarks will reflect the most complete FFY data available. Since the Extended Employment Services and the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing programs are state funded only, all reporting will be based on a state fiscal year. This Plan will cover fiscal years (SFY) 2017 through 2021.

## **Vocational Rehabilitation**

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Program Vision Statement**

“Your success at work means our work is a success.”

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Program Mission Statement**

“Preparing individuals with disabilities for employment and community enrichment.”

## Vocational Rehabilitation Program Goals

**Goal #1 – Provide excellent vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities while they prepare to obtain, maintain, or regain competitive integrated employment.**

1. **Objective:** Provide appropriate and effective vocational rehabilitation services to eligible customers to include job supports and training to increase employment opportunities, job stability, and employment retention.

**Performance Measure:** The number of customers who successfully achieve employment.

**Benchmark:** Meet or exceed FFY 2016 performance.

**Baseline:** 2,186 customers entered employment in FFY 2015.

**Performance Measure:** Average hourly wage of customers who successfully obtain employment.

**Benchmark:** Meet or exceed FFY 2016 average hourly wage.

**Baseline:** Customers earned an average hourly wage of \$11.74 in FFY 2015.

2. **Objective:** Deliver comprehensive transition services to transition age students and youth with disabilities to prepare them for employment.

- A. **Performance Measure:** The number applications for students and youth entering the IDVR program.

**Benchmark:** Meet or exceed FFY 2016 numbers.

**Baseline:** Number of applications for students and youth in FFY 2015: 1,782

- B. **Performance Measure:** The number of students and youth who achieve an employment outcome.

**Benchmark:** Meet or exceed FFY 2016 numbers.

**Baseline:** Number of students and youth who achieved employment in FFY 2015: 574.

3. **Objective:** Increase customer engagement in the VR process.

A. **Performance Measure:** The number of first time approved Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE).

**Benchmark:** Meet or exceed FFY 2016 numbers.

**Baseline:** Number of first time approved plans in FFY 2015: 3,859

B. **Performance Measure:** The rehabilitation rate of individuals exiting the IDVR program.

**Benchmark:** Meet or exceed the federal performance standard of 55.8%.

**Baseline:** FFY 2015 rate = 56.59%

**Goal #2 - Provide organizational excellence within the agency through increased customer satisfaction, federal and state compliance.**

1. **Objective:** Evaluate the satisfaction of customer's vocational rehabilitation experience and service delivery.

**Performance Measure:** Customer satisfaction rate.

**Benchmark:** Maintain a customer satisfaction rate of at least 90% (agree and strongly agree).

**Baseline:** Customer overall satisfaction rate for FFY 2015: 87.61%

2. **Objective:** Demonstrate compliance with state and federal regulations.

**Performance Measure:** The number of federal and state audit findings.

**Benchmark:** Zero findings for performance year.

**Baseline:** Two audits completed in FFY 2015:

- Management Audit for FY 2009-2013: 3 findings were identified.
- Single Audit for SY 2014 (results presented in SY 2015): 1 finding identified.

3. **Objective:** IDVR will recruit, employ and retain the most qualified staff to deliver quality services to individuals with disabilities.

**Performance Measure:** Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) compliance.

**Benchmark:** Maintain a CSPD rate of 85% or better.

**Baseline:** CSPD rate for FFY 2015: 77%.

**Goal #3 - Develop strong relationships with businesses and employers to provide quality employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.**

1. **Objective:** IDVR to be recognized as the disability expert in the workforce system to meet the needs of the business community.

A. **Performance Measure:** The number of different employers hiring IDVR customers.

**Benchmark:** Meet or exceed previous performance.

**Baseline:** 1519 different employers hired IDVR customers in FFY 2015.

## Extended Employment Services

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### Mission

Idahoans with significant disabilities are some of the state's most vulnerable citizens. The Extended Employment Services (EES) Program provides people with significant disabilities employment opportunities either in a community supported or workshop setting.

### Vision

Provide meaningful employment opportunities to enable Idaho's Most Severely Disabled to seek, train-for and retain real work success.

### Goal #1 – Provide employment opportunities for individuals who require long-term support services through the Extended Employment Services program.

1. **Objective:** Maximize the use of State funds to serve individuals who require long-term vocational supports, using the principles of informed choice, for meaningful employment.

**Performance Measure:** Number of individuals served.

**Benchmark:** Meet or exceed previous number served.

**Baseline:** 754 customers were served in SFY 2015.

**Performance Measure:** Number of individuals on the EES waitlist.

**Benchmark:** Reduce the waitlist from previous number.

**Baseline:** 357 individuals were on the waitlist at the end of SY 2015.

## **Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CDHH)**

### **Role of CDHH**

CDHH is an independent agency. This is a flow-through council for budgetary and administrative support purposes only with no direct programmatic implication for IDVR. The following is the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's Strategic Plan.

### **Mission**

Dedicated to making Idaho a place where persons, of all ages, who are deaf or hard of hearing have an equal opportunity to participate fully as active, productive and independent citizens.

### **Vision**

To ensure that individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or hearing impaired have a centralized location to obtain resources and information about services available.

### **Goal #1 – Work to increase access to employment, educational and social-interaction opportunities for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.**

1. *Objective:* Continue to provide information and resources.

*Performance Measure:* Track when information and resources are given to consumers.

*Benchmark:* Create and maintain several brochures, website pages and other information about employment, education and social-interaction.

### **Goal #2 – Increase the awareness of the needs of persons who are deaf and hard of hearing through educational and informational programs.**

1. *Objective:* Continue to increase the awareness.

*Performance Measure:* Give presentations and trainings to various groups through education and social media.

*Benchmark:* Present to various organizations including state agencies, corrections, courts, schools, veterans groups, and businesses about the needs of persons who are deaf and hard of hearing.

**Goal #3 – Encourage consultation and cooperation among departments, agencies, and institutions serving the deaf and hard of hearing.**

1. *Objective:* Continue encouraging consultation and cooperation.

*Performance Measure:* Track when departments, agencies, and institutions are cooperating (such as Department of Corrections and Health and Welfare.)

*Benchmark:* Present to various local, state, and federal (if requested) agencies about the need for cooperation providing services needed for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

**Goal #4 – Provide a network through which all state and federal programs dealing with the deaf and hard of hearing individuals can be channeled.**

1. *Objective:* The Council's office will provide the network.

*Performance Measure:* Track when information is provided.

*Benchmark:* The Council will continue to maintain a network through their website, social media, brochures, telephone calls, video phone calls and personal communication.

**Goal #5 – Determine the extent and availability of services to the deaf and hard of hearing, determine the need for further services and make recommendations to government officials to insure that the needs of deaf and hard of hearing citizens are best served.**

1. *Objective:* The Council will determine the availability of services available.

*Performance Measure:* The Council will administer assessments, facilitate meetings to determine the needs.

*Benchmark:* The Council will continue to monitor the recommendations of the Mental Health Task Force and Findings and Recommendations for Provision of Mental Health Services from the Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Report 2014, as issued by the Division of Behavioral Health Analysis and Response to ensure compliance. The Council will also continue to work with Idaho Hospital systems to develop strategies and plans to strengthen the relationship with the deaf and hard of hearing community in the field of healthcare.

*Benchmark:* The Council will support the Legislative process for the Licensure of Sign Language Interpreters. The Council also will participate in the medical advisory committees and meetings to further the goal.

**Goal #6 – To coordinate, advocate for, and recommend the development of public policies and programs that provide full and equal opportunity and accessibility for the deaf and hard of hearing persons in Idaho.**

1. **Objective:** The Council will make available copies of policies concerning deaf and hard of hearing issues.

**Performance Measure:** Materials that are distributed about public policies.

**Benchmark:** The Executive Director of the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing will continue to facilitate meetings with different agencies including Health and Welfare, corrections, schools, veteran’s groups, medical centers, and businesses to create public policy, including Interpreter standards.

**Goal #7 – To monitor consumer protection issues that involves the deaf and hard of hearing in the state of Idaho.**

1. **Objective:** The Council will be the “go to” agency for resolving complaints from deaf and hard of hearing consumers concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Performance Measure:** Track how many complaints are received regarding the ADA.

**Benchmark:** The Council will provide information and create brochures regarding all aspects of the ADA that affect persons with hearing loss. In addition, the Council will partner with the Northwest ADA Center – Idaho to provide accurate information and guidance, on disability, rehabilitation, business, rehabilitation engineering, special education, the build environment, accessibility to buildings, website accessibility, civil rights law, and the role of the ADA Coordinator

**Goal #8 – Submit periodic reports to the Governor, the legislature, and departments of state government on how current federal and state programs, rules, regulations, and legislation affect services to persons with hearing loss.**

1. **Objective:** The Council will submit reports.

**Performance Measure:** Reports will be accurate and detailed.

**Benchmark:** The Council will continue to create and provide periodic reports to the Governor’s office. The Council will continue to present a needs assessment report to certain departments/agencies as needed.

## **External Factors Impacting IDVR**

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The field of Vocational Rehabilitation is dynamic due to the nature and demographics of the customers served and the variety of disabilities addressed. Challenges facing the Division include:

### **Adequate Supply of Qualified Personnel**

IDVR is dedicated to providing the most qualified personnel to address the needs of the customers they serve. Challenges in recruitment have been prevalent over the past several years. Recruiting efforts have been stifled by low wages as compared to other Idaho state agencies as well as neighboring states. IDVR has identified the need to develop relationships with universities specifically offering a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. Furthermore, IDVR has identified universities offering coursework for other degree programs that will meet eligibility for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). Lastly, IDVR has collaborated with the University of Idaho to advance the profession of rehabilitation counseling.

### **State and Federal Economic and Political Climate**

While Idaho has seen some improvement in its economic growth over the past year there are a variety of influences which can affect progress. Influences can vary from natural disasters to international conflicts. Individuals with disabilities have historically experienced much higher unemployment rates, even in strong economic times. Furthermore, Idaho has one of the highest percentages per capita of workers in the country making minimum wage. IDVR recognizes this and strives to develop relationships within both the private and public sectors in an effort to increase employment opportunities and livable wages for its customers.

The political elements are by far the most difficult for IDVR to overcome. At the state level, the Division is subject to legislative action regarding annual budget requests including service dollars and personnel expansion. Any legislation pertaining to service provision either by public or private sectors will have a definite impact on Division services and service providers.

IDVR is also affected by decisions made at the federal level. Significant changes impacting the Vocational Rehabilitation program came to light on July 22, 2014, with the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This law replaces the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which formerly governed the Vocational Rehabilitation program. WIOA includes many substantial changes aimed to improve the nation's workforce development system to help states and local areas better align workforce programs, with each other, and with the needs of employers for a skilled workforce

While all of the implications to WIOA remain unclear due to the absence of final regulations, IDVR is taking steps to strategize and incorporate those changes that can be implemented now. IDVR is also working with the core WIOA partners to develop strategies on initiatives that require joint collaboration, such as the Combined State Plan and common performance measures.

WIOA will require IDVR to implement substantial programmatic changes. These changes will impact policy development, staff training, and compliance reporting requirements. The most impactful changes are the fiscal and programmatic requirements to increase and expand services to students and youth with disabilities. The Division has diligently been working to address this new requirement and continues to move forward with implementation of pre-employment transition service provision and strategically evaluating the impact of this requirement to the overall program.

### **Adequate Availability of Services**

Due to the rural nature of Idaho, there are isolated pockets of the state with limited vendor options. This can directly impact customer informed choice. Furthermore, a vendor's inability to meet required credentialing under IDAPA could impact a customer's options. Lastly, changes to other program criteria could eliminate services to customers. A change in Health and Welfare's criteria for the HCBS Medicaid Waiver is one example affecting program services.

### **Technological Advances in Both Assistive Rehabilitation Products and Information Technology**

IDVR recognizes the importance of both information and assistive technology advances as intricate to the success of the Division as well as the customers it serves. The cost and rapid changes in these technologies influence the overall program success. IDVR is dedicated to keeping current of the latest trends in both assistive rehabilitation technology and information technology, and in training Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and staff. IDVR employs Information Technology staff to develop innovative ways to utilize technology in carrying out its mission. IDVR also collaborates with the Idaho Assistive Technology Project through the University of Idaho with center locations throughout the state.

All staff of the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation take pride in providing the most effective, efficient services available to individuals with disabilities seeking employment. Management is committed to continued service to the people of Idaho. The goals and objectives outlined in the IDVR Strategic Plan are designed to maximize the provision of services to Idahoans with disabilities as well as promote program accountability.